

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 207668

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. PORTUGUESE MODERATES MUST GET TOUGH, OR FAIL

SEEKING TO EXPLAIN COSTA GOMES' ACTIONS, EMBASSY LISBON SEES THE PRESIDENT AS EITHER INCREDIBLY NAIVE AND INEPT, OR A SUBJECT OF BLACKMAIL BY THE COMMUNISTS, OR IN LAGUE WITH GONCALVES. NOTWITHSTANDING THE CONSIDERABLE PROBLEMS GONCALVES MAY BE ABLE TO CAUSE FROM HIS NEW POSITION, HOWEVER:

--SOARES' REFUSAL OF COSTA GOMES' ENTICING OFFER OF A MAJORITY IN THE NEW GOVERNMENT JUST BARELY SAVED THE ANTI-COMMUNIST MOVEMENT FROM COLLAPSE.

--WITHOUT THE SOCIALISTS OR THE PPD, WHICH IS LIKELY TO CONFIDENTIAL

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FOLLOW SUIT, THE AZEVEDO GOVERNMENT WILL BE AT BEST A SHAM.

--WITH COSTA GOMES HAVING CEDED MOST OF HIS AUTHORITY

AND PRESTIGE, THE COMMUNISTS ARE THE CHIEF BENEFICIARY OF PORTUGAL'S CONTINUING POLITICAL IMPASSE.

THE ANTUNES NINE STILL HAVE IMPORTANT RESIDUAL ASSETS, INCLUDING THE CONSERVATIVE POPULATION, THE SOCIALISTS' POPULAR BASE, MODERATES IN THE OFFICER CORPS, AND IMPLICIT SUPPORT

FROM THE CHURCH AND THE WEST. BUT THEIR PROBLEM IS, AS ALWAYS, THAT OF CONVERTING THESE ASSETS INTO EFFECTIVE POLITICAL WEAPONS AGAINST A DETERMINED MINORITY THAT REFUSES TO RELAX ITS GRIP ON THE KEY LEVERS OF POWER.

AMBASSADOR'S COMMENT: AN ANTI-COMMUNIST STRATEGY CANNOT SUCCEED WITHOUT A GREATER SHOW OF NAKED POWER AND SHEER GUTS THAN THE MODERATES HAVE SO FAR SHOWN. THIS MUST ALSO INCLUDE THE LARGE TASK OF BETTER COORDINATING THEIR TOTAL ASSETS, INCLUDING SOARES AND HIS PARTY. (CONFIDENTIAL)
LISBON 5057, 8/31.)

2. CUBA: ECHEVERRIA ON BEARDING CASTRO

FOLLOWING HIS RECENT TRIP TO HAVANA MEXICAN PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA TOLD AMBASSADOR JOVA THAT CASTRO, WHEN ASKED, HAD SAID THAT HE DID INDEED WANT TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE US AND TO ACHIEVE SOME NEW FORM OF RELATIONSHIP. ECHEVERRIA ALSO OBSERVED THAT:

--CASTRO MIGHT BE WILLING TO CONCEDE COMPENSATION FOR EXPROPRIATIONS IN RETURN FOR A US OFFER OF COMPENSATION FOR THE ECONOMIC DAMAGE WROUGHT BY THE BLOCKADE.

--IT IS OF KEY IMPORTANCE TO THE HEMISPHERE TO BEGIN TO DRAW CUBA OUT OF THE SOVIET ORBIT.

ECHEVERRIA ADDED THAT HE FOUND THAT WITH CASTRO, WHO POSSESSES A "TROPICAL TEMPER," GENTLE PERSISTENCE OFTEN BRINGS ABOUT A MORE REASONED REPLY AFTER INITIAL EMOTIONALISM.
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(CONFIDENTIAL) MEXICO 7737, 8/30.)

3. ITALY: SOCIALISTS PRESS FOR COMMUNIST PARTICIPATION

EMBASSY ROME REPORTS THAT ALTHOUGH PRIME MINISTER MORO AND THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT (DC) LEADERS REMAIN ADAMANTLY OPPOSED TO COMMUNIST (PCI) PARTICIPATION IN THE GOVERNMENT THERE IS DISCORD WITHIN THE PARTY AND CONTINUED PRESSURE FROM THE SOCIALISTS (PSI).

--THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS' ABRUPT POLICY SHIFT IN EARLY AUGUST ALLOWING DC AND PCI COOPERATION ON THE LOCAL LEVEL HAS REINVIGORATED INTEREST IN A NATIONAL COALI-

TION.

--MORO IS CLEARLY TEMPORIZING TO AVOID INTRA-PARTY CONFRONTATION.

WHILE THE PSI MAY NOT PRESS TOO HARD UNTIL AFTER ITS DECEMBER CONGRESS, IT HAS MADE CLEAR THAT ITS DEMAND IS NOT NEGOTIABLE. (CONFIDENTIAL) ROME 12497, 8/30.)

4. ANGOLA: MPLA CHARGES SOUTH AFRICAN INVASION

MPLA OFFICIALS AUGUST 30 REITERATED THE CHARGE THAT SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS, AIDED BY PORTUGUESE REACTIONARIES AND SOUTH AFRICAN MERCENARIES, ATTACKED PEREIRA D'ECA IN SOUTHERN ANGOLA AUGUST 27. THE OFFICIALS CLAIMED THE ATTACKS WERE AIMED AT MPLA UNITS AND THAT A NUMBER OF BUILDINGS WERE SACKED AND DESTROYED.

CONSUL GENERAL KILLORAN IS SEEKING CONFIRMATION OF THE MAKEUP AND PURPOSE OF WHITE FORCES ALLEGEDLY ENTERING FROM NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. KILLORAN WAS TOLD BY THE LUANDA COMMANDO COMMANDER THAT THE FORCE CONSISTED OF 100 MERCENARIES FROM MOZAMBIQUE AND RHODESIA COMBINED WITH PORTUGUESE FROM SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL ANGOLA. (UNCLASSIFIED) LUANDA 1289 AND (CONFIDENTIAL) LUANDA 1288, 8/31.)

5. PALESTINIANS GEAR UP TO DENOUNCE INTERIM AGREEMENT?

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FATAH AND THE POPULAR DEMOCRATIC FRONT ISSUED SIMULTANEOUS STATEMENTS IN KUWAIT AUGUST 30 CONDEMNING THE INTERIM AGREEMENT IN THE SINAI. EMBASSY KUWAIT REPORTS THAT WHILE THE PDFLP WAS DIRECTLY CRITICAL OF THE EGYPTIAN REGIME, FATAH LAID THE BLAME ENTIRELY AT THE AMERICAN DOORSTEP. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE) KUWAIT 3578, 8/31.)

6. IRAN PROMISES YEMEN AID NOW--BUT WILL IT DELIVER LATER?

YEMENI PRESIDENT AL HAMDI WAS GIVEN THE FULL HEAD OF STATE TREATMENT DURING HIS AUGUST 27-29 VISIT TO TEHRAN. BUT, COMMENTING ON PRIME MINISTER HOVEYDA'S PROMISE TO HAMDI OF ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL AID, EMBASSY TEHRAN NOTES THAT IRAN CONTINUES TO MAKE FOREIGN COMMITMENTS DESPITE WARNINGS THAT IT MUST KEEP EXPENDITURES WITHIN BOUNDS. EVIDENTLY, THE GOI FINDS IT EASIER TO SAY YES FIRST AND THEN PROCRASTINATE, RATHER THAN SAY NO. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE) TEHRAN 8455, 8/31.) INGERSOLL

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